

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 IO-14

NEA-10 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 AEC-11 OMB-01 DRC-01 /145 W

----- 117373

R 301840Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4442

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USNATO BRUSSELS 3248

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS UNN

EUCOM

DOD WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

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VIENNA FOR MBFR/HOLZAPF EL AND USIS/ARNOLD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: ATLANTIC TENSIONS OVER MIDDLE EAST: FRENCH PRESS TREATMENT

SUMMARY: COMMENTING ON U.S. CIRITICISM OF LACK OF
EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY DURING MIDDLE EAST EVENTS, FRENCH PRESS
OBSERVERS IN PAST FEW DAYS HAVE DISCERNED THREE MAJOR EFFECTS:

(1) A "FUNDAMENTAL CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE", AS ONE WRITER PUT IT,

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WITHIN ATLANTIC ALLIANCE THAT PUTS YEAR OF EUROPE AND REDEFINITION

OF ATLANTIC RELATIONS VERY FAR AWAY; (2) THE LIKELIHOOD THAT SOVIET-AMERICAN DETENTE, THOUGH SHAKY, WILL WORK TO DETRIMENT OF EUROPE; (3) THE STRENGTHENING OF EUROPEAN "IDENTITY" AND A BOOST TO CAUSE OF EUROPEAN UNITY. END SUMMARY.

1. LE MONDE, ON DAY AFTER PRESIDENT'S OCTOBER 26 NEWS CONFERENCE, SAID EDITORIALY THAT "THE U.S., FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE WAS BORN, HAS BLAMED ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES OPENLY AND COLLECTIVELY. THE ATLANTIC MALAISE... APPARENTLY DEALS A FATAL BLOW TO THE 'YEAR OF EUROPE' AND 'REVITALIZATION OF THE ALLIANCE'." FROM WASHINGTON, FIGARO'S CORRESPONDENT TERMED THE SITUATION A FUNDAMENTAL CRISIS OF CONFIDENCE WITHOUT PRECEDENT SINCE THE SUEZ WAR OF 1956." IT WILL, HE SAID, "MODIFY THE WHOLE CLIMATE OF VAST CONSULTATION" BETWEEN NINE AND U.S. ON REDFINING TRANS-ATLANTIC RELATIONS. EUROPEAN SELFISHNESS, HE WROTE, JUSTIFIES AMERICAN SELFISHNESS IN WHICH "MANY INFLUENTIAL MEMBERS OF CONGRESS DEMAND TOUGH NEGOTIATIONS" TO GET "IMPORTANT TRADE CONCESSIONS" IN EXCHANGE FOR MAINTENANCE OF U.S. FORCES IN EUROPE.

2. "WE ARE VERY FAR FROM THE SO-CALLED YEAR OF EUROPE AND THE FAMOUS CHARTER DEAR TO KISSINGER", DECLARED ORTF TELEVISION OCTOBER 29, WHILE A RADIO COLLEAGUE NEXT MORNING TOLD LISTENERS THAT "NEVER HAVE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC GONE THROUGH SUCH BAD TIMES... WHAT A DIFFERENCE FROM THE CUBAN CRISIS WHEN THE ATLANTIC ALLIES, AND FRANCE FIRST, SUPPORTED PRESIDENT KENNEDY..." LE MONDE ALSO RECALLED CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, SAYING THAT "CONSULTATIONS HAVE NEVER BEEN EASY AT TIMES OF CRISIS. YET... PRESIDENT KENNEDY MADE IT A POINT TO ASSOCIATE HIS ALLIES WITH HIS ACTION AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE." DIFFERENCES BETWEEN EUROPE AND U.S. ON MIDDLE EAST, PAPER WENT ON, ARE BASED ON SUBSTANCE MORE THAN FORM -- EUROPEAN INTERESTS IN MIDDLE EAST DIFFER FROM THOSE OF U.S. "FOR THE U.S., ARAB OIL IS IMPORRTANT," SAID LE MONDE, BUT "FOR EUROPE, IT IS VITAL". THIS THEME WAS ALSO SOUNDED BY COMBAT: "EUROPE DEPENDS TOO MUCH ON ARAB OIL SUPPLIERS TO ALIGN ITSELF, WITHOUT NUANCE, WITH THE AMERICAN POSITION".
.../... IRWIN

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3. IN GAULLIST PARTY PAPER LA NATION AMERICAN CRITICISM OF EUROPE DREW THIS REJOINER OCTOBER 29: "THE AMERICANS ARE NOT INTERESTED IN WHETHER EUROPE WANTED TO BE DRAGGED INTO A CONFLICT WHICH WAS NOT ITS CONFLICT, IN TOTAL IGNORANCE OF WHAT WAS BEING HATCHED OVER ITS HEAD." NEXT DAY, PAPER THOUGHT A LESSON SHOULD BE DRAWN FROM "THE CRISIS IN AMERICAN-EUROPEAN RELATIONS" RESULTING FROM MIDDLE EAST WAR. CONTRARY TO WHAT MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON APPARENTLY BELIEVE, IT SAID, FRANCE AND EUROPE ARE "ENTITLED TO DEMAND TO BE CONSULTED BEFORE ANY DECISIONS TAKEN CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF THIS CONTINENT...THIS MUST PROMPT EUROPEANS TO CLAIM MORE FIRMLY THAN BEFORE THE STATUS OF EQUAL UNCLASSIFIED

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PARTNERS, WHICH AMERICANS OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZE BUT OFTEN...
CONFUSE WITH THE RELATIONSHIP OF PROTECTOR AND DOCILE PROTEGE."

4. IN COMMENT OCTOBER 30 UNDER HEADLINE "AMERICAN BLUNDER HAS STRENGTHENED EUROPEAN IDENTIFY," FRANCE SOIR SAID THAT IMPORTANT THING FOR FRANCE HAS BEEN THAT EUROPEANS ON THIS OCCASION REACTED LIKE EUROPEANS AND NOT AS PASSIVE MEMBERS OF AN ALLIANCE THAT DOES NOT, INCIDENTALLY, COVER MIDDLE EAST."
LA NATION ALSO PLAYED THIS THEME: "POLEMIC STATED BY THE U.S. SHOULD PUSH EUROPEANS TO COMPLETE THEIR UNITY...THIS IS AN ADDITIONAL SUBJECT OF CONCERN AT TIME WHEN (MBFR) IS OPENING IN

VIENNA." REMINDING READERS THAT FRANCE IS STAYING OUT OF MBFR, PAPER SAID FRANCE WON'T CHANGE THIS ATTITUDE NOW, "AFTER WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW HAVE UNILATERALLY DECIDED TO TAKE THE DESTINIES OF ISRAELIS AND ARABS IN HAND...ALL THESE FACTS ARE FURTHER REASONS WHY NINE MUST PERFECT THEIR UNITY..."

5. SEVERAL COMMENTATORS THOUGHT DETENTE BETWEEN MOSCOW AND WASHINGTON, THOUGH FRAGILE, WOULD OPERATE AGAINST EUROPEAN INTERESTS AND THAT ATLANTIC TENSIONS MIGHT DRIVE U.S. CLOSER TO SOVIET UNION. THUS, FIGARO SAID U.S. IS "CERTAIN THAT SHE SHOULD NOT EXPECT MUCH OF HER EUROPEAN FRIENDS IN EVENT OF MAJOR DIFFICULTY" AND THEREFORE WASHINGTON WILL FEEL "EVEN MORE TEMPTED" TO SEEK ARRANGEMENTS WITH MOSCOW "WITHOUT OVERLY CARING FOR SPECIAL INTERESTS" OF EUROPEAN PARTNERS. THERE IS REASON TO FEEL, FIGARO ADDED, THAT IT IS IN THIS FRAME OF MIND THAT U.S. WILL OPEN MBFR TALKS. ON ORTF RADIO, A COMMENTATOR THOUGHT SIMILARLY: "THE MBFR NEGOTIATIONS, LIKE THOSE OF CSCE, ARE IN DANGER MORE THAN EVER OF BEING REDUCED TO A DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS." IN FRANCE SOIR, SERGE MAFFERT WROTE THAT PARIS IS CHIEFLY PREOCCUPIED BY MANNER IN WHICH SOVIETS AND AMERICANS TOOK OVER MIDDLE EAST WAR AND THE CEASE FIRE. THEY "NOT ONLY DID NOT REALLY INFORM AND EVEN LESS CONSULT THEIR EUROPEAN PARTNERS," BUT ALSO GAVE IMPRESSION OF WANTING TO BAR ANY EUROPEAN ROLE IN SUBSEQUENT DEVELOPMENTS, HE SAID, AND CONCLUDED: "FRANCE'S MAJOR ANXIETY IS THAT, WHILE LIMITS AND FRAGILITY OF DETENTE HAVE JUST BEEN CONSPICUOUSLY ILLUSTRATED, WASHINGTON AND MOSCOW STILL INTEND TO REMAIN THE ONLY ONES TO DETERMINE THE FATE OF THE WORLD."IRWIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, DETENTE, AMITY, FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973PARIS28117
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973104/aaaaacxt.tel
Line Count: 196
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: kellerpr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21-Aug-2001 by phillir0>; APPROVED <17-Jan-2002 by kellerpr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ATLANTIC TENSIONS OVER MIDDLE EAST: FRENCH PRESS TREATMENT SUMMARY: COMMENTING ON U.S. CIRITICISM OF LACK OF
TAGS: PFOR, FR, XN, US, UR, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005